

A FRIENDLY  
LETTER  
TO  
Dr. BENTLEY.

Occasion'd by his New Edition of  
PARADISE LOST.

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By a Gentleman of Christ-Church  
College, Oxon.

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*Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui Lumen  
ademptum.*

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VIRGIL.



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L O N D O N:

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S I R,



Received the *New-year's-Gift* you was so obliging as to make me, of your new Edition of *Paradise Lost*, which I perus'd with all the Attention and Candor you desired, and with an Inclination, which some People I fear never read *Milton* or any Author whatever with, I mean — to be pleas'd. The Edition must be confess'd by our most inveterate Enemies to be truly beautiful. The Prints at the Beginning are extreatnly well done, for which we make all due Acknowledgments to the ingenious G. Virtue, Engraver. The Paper is large, and so is the Print, for which we are indebted to the voluminous Jacob Tonson in the Strand, Stationer.

Comma's

*Comma's and Points are set exactly right:  
And who shall rob the Doctor of his Mite.*

But lastly and principally, as to the Notes, Why—they—they indeed are truly *Critical*, though between you and I my Friend, not altogether so *Poetical*: And as I doubt the Adversary will be apt to attack us on this weak side, I desire that we may look over some of the most *extraordinary* of them together, that we may be the better on our Guard, and have wherewith to put to silence the Gain-sayers.

But before we come to the Body of the Book, it may not be amiss to cast an Eye on the *Preface*, and see how we stand there; for these snarling Pretenders to Criticism, you know, are always sure to fall foul on the first thing they come at.

It begins with a very fine and moral Reflection, that 'tis but common Justice to let the Purchaser know what he is to expect in this new Edition of *Paradise Lost*. Now here a stingy Fellow that has purchas'd the Book at a Guinea's Expence, will be unreasonable enough to affirm, perhaps, that it would have been but common Justice to have inform'd the World of that in the publick Advertisements; and then

honest People might have still kept their own.

After having assured us, that the Faults in Orthography, Points and Capital Letters, which swarm in the prior Editions, are here very carefully and judiciously corrected, you exclaim very warmly against the suppos'd Friend to whom Milton committed his Copy, and the overseeing of the Press; under whose Ignorance and Audaciousness you very wittily observe, that Paradise may be said to be twice lost. O fye, fye, Doctor! Surely, surely, this thread-bare Conceit was a little out of Style; besides, 'tis an unhappy Hint to our Adversaries, who, if any of 'em should chance to prove as witty as our selves, may take occasion from hence to aver, That under the Ignorance and Audaciousness of Editors, Paradise may be said to be Three times lost.

But still a worse Misfortune than this, you tell us, was brought upon our Poem. How! A worse Misfortune than to be quite lost? Why, ay—for it seems there was more found than there should be; for this same rascally Editor took an Advantage to foist in, you say, several of his own Verses, without the blind Poet's Discovery. So that if any one should cavil at this, you may easily answer, with Wittoll in the Play, that he found nothing but what was to his Loss. Here you very justly

ly observe, that this Trick of foisting has been too frequently play'd, especially in Works publish'd after the Death of the Authors; and poor Milton, you think, might very well be reckon'd to be more than half dead, because he was threescore Years old. But hold, Sir; I doubt that we have here kill'd him a little too soon; for farther on, in the same Preface, you inform us, that when Milton afterwards publish'd his Paradise Regain'd, and Samson Agonistes, (that is, after he was more than half dead) that Edition is without Faults, because he was then in high Credit, (come to Life again) and had chang'd his old Printer and Supervisor. If so, Doctor, won't People look on it as something incredible, think you, that he should come to Life again to so little purpose? That when both the Poem and its Author had slowly grown, as you tell us, to a vast Reputation, they should have so little Regard for one another, as never to come together? That Milton should bestir himself in such a notable manner, to make an Edition of his *Paradise regain'd* without any Faults at all; and so far abandon the poor Bantling which had gain'd him this vast Reputation, as to send it into the wide World in such a beggarly Dress, with all its Imperfections on its Head; nay, swarming, as you elegantly express it, to such a degree,

degree, that you are oblig'd to lop off upwards of 50 Lines in one place, and several single Dozens in others? Is this likely? Is this probable? Is this possible, says the World? Yes, 'tis evident, says Dr. Bentley, and whoever questions it, is an illiterate, injudicious Son of a Pseudo-Critick; nay, it betrays, you say, the utmost ill Nature, as well as ill Judgment, to contend that ever Milton got his Poem to be read to him, or gave it the least Correction, when 'tis plainly polluted with the most monstrous Faults, abounding with abominable Blemishes, and labouring under the most miserable Deformity. Ay, but my Friend! there are some who are bold enough to affirm, that this is by no means plain; that what you call Faults are often the principal Beauties in the Book, (Numbers of which kind I shall point out to you, as we go along) and that therefore what would have been ill Nature in you, because you knew no better, is but Justice in them. And here, Doctor, I think we had best lay hold of this Concession, and plead it as we go, that Ignorance, like Charity, covers a multitude of Sins.

But a farther Misfortune yet (than being quite lost, or too much found) befel, you assure us, this noble Poem, and which must be laid to the Author's Charge, though

he may fairly plead Not guilty. Dear Dicke, give me thy Hand: I heartily congratulate thee on having had so little to do with Law, as to talk at this rate. A Thing must be laid to a Man's charge, though he may fairly plead not Guilty. Ha, ha, ha! this is downright *Christmas Play*:

*Riddle me, riddle me ree,  
Who's he that is blind, altho' he can see?*

Every Reader will here, I conceive, be heartily sorry that you had not had an opportunity of looking into an *Indictment*, or standing a little in a *Court of Justice* befoe this was written.

But though the Printers and Editors Faults are corrigible, you say, by retrieving the Poets own Words, not from a Manuscript (for none exists) but by Sagacity and happy Conjecture; yet Milton's own Slips cannot be redressed without a Change both of the Words and Sense. But suppose it should be asked here, How Milton's own Faults are to be distinguish'd from those of his Printer and Editor, since no Manuscript is extant? Why, by Sagacity too, and happy Conjecture, to be sure. Hey, Doctor? Troth I think an admirable Answer, and what I'll defy any one to contradict. Such Changes you have made, it seems, which will not be found disagreeing (you)

( you hope ) from the Miltonian Character ; upon which you quote two Lines from Virgil , to let us know that you can make Verses too ; that the Shepherds go so far as to call you a Poet — but that you don't believe 'em . Troth , Sir , for once you are very much in the right ; and to convince the World how abominably they scandalize you in calling you so , I will here give them a Specimen of the Lines which you have made , and substituted in the room of some of Milton's , which you dislik'd ; from whence it will be manifest to the candid Reader , that they might with as much Justice have call'd you a Prophet as a Poet .

Book I.

*Mgl.* As from the Centre thrice to th'utmost Pole. v. 74:

## *As thrice from Arctic to Antarctic Pole.*

Bent, { and his friends. Or rather, and  
Distance, which to express, all Measure fails.

Mil. Fearless endanger'd Heaven's perpetual King. 131

Bent. Peerless endanger'dst Heaven's original King.

## Book II.

*MIL. Our Torments also may in length of Time.*

Bent. Then, as was well observ'd, our Torments may.

*Mil.* With blackest Insurrection, to confound.

Bent. With blackest Infuscation, to confound.

Mil. Pour'd out by Millions her victorious Bands.

Bent, Shot forth her forked Thunders on your Rere.

## Book II.

v. 1001. Mil. { Encroach'd on still rha' our intestine Broils,  
Weakning the Sceptre of old Night —

Bent. { Encroach'd on by Creations old and new,  
Straitning the Bounds of antient Night.

## Book III.

34. Mil. So were I equall'd with them in Renown.  
Bent. O were with him I equall'd in Renown.

150. Mil. For should Man finally be lost? Should Man.  
Bent. For finally shall Man be lost? Shall Man.

355. Mil. So high above the circling Canopy.  
Bent. So high above the most extended Comes.

643. Mil. — His Habit fit for Speed, succinct.  
Bent. — His Pace and Look as bent on speed.

## Book IV.

177. Mil. All Path of Man or Beast that pass'd that way.  
Bent. All Passage to whate'er essay'd that way.

810. Mil. Him, thus intent, Thuriel with his Spear  
touch'd lightly.

181. To which the Doctor desires to add the  
following wonderful Line.

Bent. — Knowing no real Toad durst there intrude.

858. Mil. But like a proud Steed rein'd, went haughty on.  
Bent. But haughtily stalk'd on, like a proud Steed.

## Book V.

786. Mil. Our Minds, and teach us to cast off this Yoke.  
Bent. Our Minds, to quit the Yoke, hard and unjust.

55. Mil. His fiery Chaos to receive their fall.  
Bent. It's fiery Jaws, wide to receive them all.

Mil.

## BOOK V.

Mil. Or Potent Tongue. Fool, not to think how v. 135.  
 Bent. Rhetorick of thy Tongue. Fool to attempt. { vain.

Bent. Or Rhetorick of thy Tongue. Fool to attempt.

Mil. { — All Heaven 218.  
 Resounded, and had Earth been then, all  
 Had to her Center Shook. } Earth

Now mind the Doctor.

Bent. { — Heaven's Base 218.  
 Stood trembling; but had Earth been then,  
 Had from her Center fled. } all Earth

## BOOK VI.

Mil. — The Ridges of Grim War.

Bent. — The Bridges of Grim War.

Mil. They found, they mingl'd, and with subtle Art.

Bent. They pound, they mingle, and with sooty Chark.

Mil. Under the weight of Mountains buried deep.

Bent. Dash'd, all their Labours vain to Fragments

[broke.]

Mil. Hell heard th'unufferable Noise —

Bent. Hell heard the hideous Cries and Yells —

236.

513.

652.

867.

## BOOK VII.

Mil. Heaven's height, and with the Center mix 235.  
 [the Pole.

Bent. Heaven's height, and overwhelm th'empyrean  
 [Plains.

Mil. And Earth self-balanc'd on her Centre hung.

Bent. And Earth terraqueous on her Centre hung.

## Book VII.

- v. 346. Mil. { Hither, as to their Fountain, other Stars  
 Repairing, in their golden Urns draw Light.  
 Bent. { Hither, as to their Spring, the Planet Stars  
 Repairing, draw their Fill in golden Urns.
- .813  
 506. Mil. { —A Creature, who not prone  
 And Brute as other Creatures—  
 Bent. { —A Creature, who not prone  
 To Earth, nor mute, nor bestial—

## Book VIII.

123. Mil. { —What if the Sun  
 Be Centre to the World? and other Stars, &c.  
 Bent. { —What if the Sun  
 Be Centre to his System? and his Planets, &c.
- .395. Mil. { Much less can Bird with Beast, or Fish  
 with Fowl.  
 So well converse; nor with the Ox the  
 Ape. [Ape.  
 Bent. But Ox with Ape cannot so well converse.
- .653. Mil. { —The Angel up to Heaven  
 From the thick Shade, and Adam to his  
 Bower.  
 Bent. { —The Angel up to Heaven,  
 Adam to ruminant on past Discourse.

## Book IX.

55. Mil. { —Than the Wrath  
 Of stern Achilles, on his Foe pursu'd.  
 Bent. { —Than the Wrath  
 Of stern Achilles, or the Arms and Man.
65. Mil. —Four times cross'd the Car of Night.  
 Bent. —Four times cross'd the Cone of Night.

## B O O K IX.

- Mil. —— Her form Angelic. v. 458.  
 Bent. —— Her form Adamic.
- Mil. { —— Pleasing was his Shape, 504.  
 And lovely; never since, of Serpent Kind
- Bent. { —— Pleasing was his Shape,  
 Then lovely; tho' not since, with Tract oblique
- Mil. To Beasts whom God on their Creation Day. 556.  
 Bent. To all the Beasts: as our Experience deem'd.

## B O O K X.

- Mil. —— The aggregated Soil. 297.  
 Bent. —— The aggregated Stuff.
- Mil. Him follow'd, issuing forth to th' open Field. 533.  
 Bent. Him follow'd, Guard deform, to tb' open Field.
- Mil. To whom the Sin-born Monster — 596.  
 Bent. To whom the grify Monster —
- Mil. { —— All too little seems  
 To stuff this Maw, this vast unhide- 600.  
 [bound Corpse.]
- Bent. { —— All is yet too small  
 To stuff this Maw, that's emptied while it's  
 [fill'd.]
- Mil. Let in these watchful Furies. 620.  
 Bent. Let in these cursed Fiends.
- Mil. New Heaven and Earth shall to the Ages rise. 647.  
 Bent. New Heavens and Earth shall out of Ashes rise.
- Mil. To the Reception of their Matter Act. 807.  
 Bent. To the Capacity of their Subject Act.

## B O O K XII.

## Book XII.

648. Mil. { They hand in hand with wandring Steps,  
 [and slow,  
 Through Eden took their solitary Way.  
 Then hand in hand with social Steps their Way  
 Bent. } Through Eden took, with heavenly Comfort  
 [cheer'd.

And here, Doctor, the Reader will very readily cry out, as you desire; *What Native, unextinguishable Beauty must be impress'd and instinkted through the whole of this Poem, which the Defædation of so many Parts could not hinder from shining forth.* It seems, you say, to have been in the Condition of Terence's beautiful Virgin, who did appear so very amiable in spite of Neglect and her beggarly Habit: Now that *Vix Boni* which Terence there ascribed to his lovely Maid, and which so powerfully prevail'd over all the Disadvantages of Dress and Disquiet, being taken by some People to mean Modesty, I must likewise beg leave to cry out with the Readers, *What imitable, what astonishing Beauties must appear in all the Performances of the meek-spirited Bentley.* Modesty, my dear Friend, is one of those amiable Qualities which you never knew the Want of, and which you equally enjoy with those other human Virtues of Candor and Benevolence; nay, this is undeniably manifest in the very next

next Paragraph, where wondering at the Strength of Milton's Spirit, that made him capable of so far abstracting his Thoughts from his own Troubles, as to compose such a Poem, you say, that it would almost seem to be peculiar to him, had not Experience by others taught you, that there is that Power in the human Mind, supported with Innocence and conscientia Virtus, that can make it quite shake off all outward Uneasiness, and involve itself secure and pleas'd in its own Integrity and Entertainment. This, my dear Doctor, is extreme Humility indeed! What can be a greater Instance of a Man's being thoroughly lowly-minded, than a frank Acknowledgment that he had never experienced himself the Support either of Innocence, or conscientia Virtus? Another Instance almost equal to this, is the manner in which you finish this remarkable Preface; where you say, That had these Notes been written forty Years ago, it would have been Prudence to have suppress'd them, for fear of injuring your rising Fortune; but now, when seventy Year's had made you lay aside all Thoughts of growing wiser or richer, you made them extempore, and put them to the Press as soon as made, without any Apprehension of growing leaner by Censures, or plumper by Commendations. Admirable indeed! ha, ha, ha! and so whilst poor Milton was so oppress'd by the Weight of three-score

*score Years, that he was to be look'd on as more than half dead, and incapable of discovering the spurious Verses which were foisted into his own Poem,* the Great Bentley, when *threescore and ten had spoke loudly in his Ears,* had so much Vigor about him, that he could discover such Verses immediately without the Assistance of a single Manuscript, and correct his Author extempore by Sagacity and happy Conjecture.

And thus, my dear, incomparable, sagacious Doctor, we have at length got thro' this marvellous Preface, which every one must acknowledge to be a most suitable Introduction to the subsequent Remarks; to the Consideration of which we incontinently proceed. And here we shall have occasion, I deem, of our utmost Prowess and Resolution to defend our new Works; however, we must stand stiffly to what we have done, and, *More Critorum,* determine to battel it out, let what will be the Consequence.

### *Paradise Lost, Book I.*

V. 6. *That on the secret Top of Horeb, or of Sinai.]* You here insist on the word *Secret* being chang'd to *Sacred.* *Secret Caves, secret Valleys,* come frequently, you say, in Poetry; but *secret Top of a Mountain* is only met with here. Yes, Doctor; I fear

I fear our Adversaries will tell us, that 'tis to be met with frequently in another Book; which they may possibly be malicious enough to aver, we understand as little as we do *Paradise Lost*, I mean, the *Bible*.

In a certain Book call'd *Exodus*, one *Moses* is said to be *hid* for forty Days together, on this very Mount *Sinai*, the Top of which, we are there told, was cover'd with Clouds and thick Darkness: Which *very Man and Time*, they may affirm, *Milton* here alludes to; *That Shepherd*, who was then inspir'd to reach the chosen Seed, how Heaven and Earth rose out of Chaos. Ay, but you can give 'em, you'll say, a *Rowland* for their *Oliver*; for you remember, in that same Book, which you read when you was a School-boy, *Horeb* is called *Sacred*. 'Tis very true, Doctor; but as it does not appear but that the Bottom was as *sacred* as the Top, the Poet could not well have said *sacred* Top; but if he had made use of the word *sacred* at all, as you affirm he did, he must have said the *Top of sacred Horeb*, and not the *sacred Top of Horeb*. Besides, tho' *Horeb* is call'd *sacred*, *Sinai* is not; but the Top of it is justly said to be secret, when it appears that at the Time which the Poet speaks of, it was constantly cover'd with Clouds and Darkness.

Now the Poet wanting an Epithet to the Top both of *Horeb* and *Sinai*, very judiciously fix'd on that of *secret*, as the most proper to both. The Top of *Horeb* was *secret*, because it was *sacred*; and the Top of *Sinai* was *secret*, because it was cover'd with Clouds and Darkness. As to what you alledge next, that the *Top* could not be *secret*, because there was no Water at the *Bottom*; 'tis such an irresistible Argument, that we defy the most inveterate to say any thing against it. But supposing, you say, *secret* to be a passable Epithet, yet it is common to all Mountains whatever. Ay, Doctor! how came we to make such a Wonder of it then in the Beginning of this Note, as a thing never heard of, or met with before? Your last and principal Objection against *secret*, is, that you like *sacred* better; and as they are of so near a Sound in Pronunciation, you have such an Esteem for Milton, that which of the two Words is the better, that, you'll say, was dictated by him. I'm concern'd, my Friend, to find that you have given the Ill-natur'd so much room to accuse you of Theft. This Part of your Remark is, every word of it, pilfer'd from a Rule in the Art of *Grubæan Criticism*, which places the Foundation of all verbal Criticism in these two Suppositions:

First,

WORL

First, That an Author can never miss making use of the best Word on every Occasion; the Second, That a Critick cannot chuse but know which that is. I fear therefore that our Opposers will here turn our own Arms against us, by pretending to have that Esteem for Milton, as to believe nothing that B——y says; and seeing secret and sacred are so near in Sound, they'll insist on it, that the Word which the Critick dislikes, is that which was dictated by the Bard.

V. 13. *To my adventrous Song.]* Song you desire may be here chang'd to Wing. Wing, you say, *the properest of all Metaphors;* which is prov'd by the following Words, flight and soar, now Song could neither flie nor soar, both which Wing might do, you think. Admirable! But the principal Reason of your craving leave to make this Alteration, is, that you have occasion for the word Song a few Lines after, to substitute in the place of Rhime; now to have the same Word repeated again so soon, as you justly observe, would not do; you very providently therefore obliterate it here, that you may have the Advantage of making free with it hereafter.

V. 16. *Things unattempted yet, in Prose or Rhyme.]* Ay, here we are to have our Song

Song then, but not Rhyme it seems; and why so? Why, because Milton did not write in Rhyme himself, therefore 'twas impossible he could ever make use of the Word, or put that as equivalent to Verse, which he had before declared was no true Ornament to good Verse. The first part of this Note is unanswerable I must confess; but as to the latter part, your Scribblers, who would fain be thought Criticks, may Query, why Milton, who frequently coins English Words out of Greek and Latin, might not use the term Rhyme here in the same Sense that the Ancients did their Ρύθμος and Rhythmus, viz. for Numbers, Metre and Verse in general; and then they may villanously and maliciously Assert, that Dr. Bentley has shewn by this Note, that he understands his Classicks no better, than, ('tis plain by the first,) he does his Bible.

V. 52. Lay vanquish'd.] This is too low a Word, you desire it may be—Lay stonied, stounded, stan'd. With all my Heart, they are Words which are astonishingly Sublime and Poetical.

V. 63. No Light but rather Darkness Visible.] Darkness Visible! (you cry out) A flat Contradiction, which you prove unanswerably from Sir Isaac Newton's Treatise on Light and Colours. Ah, these Poets, these

these Poets, with their bold Figures and Flights, and all that, I'gad, do often leave us in the Dark : Hey, Doctor. We thank you therefore my Dear Friend, for affording us a little *Light*, by altering *visible Darkness* to a *transpicuous Gloom*; which word *Gloom*, you say, *is equivalent to Darkness*, yet so as to be in some measure *Transparent*. Ha ! ha ! ha ! delightful ! So that a *transpicuous Gloom* is a *transpicuous Transparency*.

V. 74. *As from the Centre, thrice to the utmost Pole.] The Distance is much too little, says Dr. Bentley : Double it thus,*

*As thrice from Artic to Antarctic Pole.*

*But better yet : vnd stordi w trte vtr s to lge or Distance, whch to express all measure fails.*

How, my dear Doctor ! If there be two such real Places as Heaven and Hell, their Distance from each other is not infinite, I hope you'll own ; if so, then surely, surely, *all measure can never fail to express that Distance.*

V. 157. *Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable.] The Printer here has bestow'd on our Poet, you say, absolute Nonsense. Hold, hold, my Dear ; I doubt we are going on a little too furiously. The Generality of Readers are apt to look on this Beginning*

of Satan's Reply to be particularly beautiful. The Generality of Readers are generally Dances; for to be Weak is not by consequence to be Miserable, says Dr. Bentley. To be Weak is Miserable, says the Devil. Well, and which are we to believe now, the Doctor or the Devil? O! me, to be sure, cries the Doctor; for the Devil is a Lyar. Is he so indeed? Why then, certainly 'twas very suitable to one of his Character to say a thing that was not true, and consequently the Speech must stand as it did. Ay; but it's no Answer, you affirm, to Belzebub's Speech; he complain'd not of Weakness, you say; but on the contrary own'd that Vigor was return'd, and their Strength undiminish'd. Dear Doctor, thou hast a mind to pass for a very great Wit, I suppose, by discovering a plaguy bad Memory. Prithhee clap on thy Spectacles, and read from Verse 84, where this Dialogue betwixt our two Friends begins, and 'tis possible you may be able to find that the Answer is not altogether so improper, as you would have us believe. Satan, in his first Speech to Beelzebub, tells him, that tho' the Field was lost, all was not lost. That, by Fate, the Strength of Gods, and their empyreal Substance could not fail; and therefore, as they were much advanc'd in Foresight, and not worse in Arms, they might hope to wage War with more Success.

Success for the future. Ay; but, answers Beelzebub, *what if our Conqueror have left us this our Spirit and Strength entire, either to make our Sufferings the stronger, or that we may do him mightier Service, as his Slaves by Right of War? What can it then avail, though yet we feel Strength undiminish'd?* — How! replies Satan hastily: Not avail? Yes, *Fall'n Cherub to be weak is miserable, doing or suffering.* And now, my Dear, which is the most beautiful, think you, or the strongest in Character, for Satan to say that to be weak is miserable, or, as you would have it, *here to dwell is miserable?* Thus, you see, Doctor, I have taken more than ordinary Pains in this particular, being very desirous to bring you, and your sad old Compeer, as you call him, to a good Understanding.

V. 169. *Hath recall'd his Ministers of Vengeance.]* Ministers, you desire, may be alter'd to Instruments; because it appears from Raphael's Narrative of the Battels in Heaven, that the Messiah alone drove out Satan and his Crew, and that therefore it is inconsistent here for the Devil to say that the Victor recall'd his Ministers, that is, the good Angels, when there were none pur-su'd them. This is a very fine Observation indeed; but the Adversary will be apt to say, that there was no manner of grounds for it; that Milton did not mean by Mi-

D nisters

nisters the good Angels, but the Thunder, Lightning, and Hail, which are immediately mention'd, and which are justly call'd Ministers, because he finely and poetically makes Persons of them, as 'tis evident from his bestowing on Thunder its Shafts; but supposing Milton did here intimate, that the good Angels pursu'd the Vanquish'd, (as 'tis certain he does in several places afterwards) where's the Inconsistency, they'll say? For tho' Raphael does say in the sixth Book, that the Messiah commanded his Saints to stand still and rest from Battel, while He alone should rout the rebel Crew; yet he does by no means intimate, that they were commanded to abstain from pursuing them after they were routed; nor is there any reason, they'll tell us, to suppose, from any thing there said, that such Orders were ever given.

So that all this long Note, with all the nice Criticism in it, together with the pathetic Lamentation over the blind Author, on account of these supposed Inconsistencies, must be either blotted out, or stand for just nothing at all.

V. 206. *In his skaly Rind.*] This you very justly and poetically change to skinny Rind, because a Whale, you say, has no Scales, but has truly a Skin; and by this means you make Milton very happily exemplify one of the great Rules of the Bathos,

*hos,* which requires that all Epithets should wholly coincide with the nature of their Substantives; thus *liquid Water*, *windy Air*, *dirty Earth*, and *burning Fire*: tho' if I might presume to offer the least Alteration after the prodigious great Bentley, I should be for having it *rindy Skin*; because if Skin is to be us'd at all, I humbly conceive that it ought to be the Substantive, for fear People should take it for a Tree instead of a Whale; or, what is still better, *skinny Skin*; for a Whale has undoubtedly no more *Rind* about him than *Scales*.

V. 218. *Infinite Goodness.*] You desire it may be chang'd to new Proofs of Goodness: *Infinite Goodness* seems here, you say, a little too high; for Justice and rigid Satisfaction were exacted for Adam's Sin. How, my dear Divine! Did not the Malice of Satan then, as Milton here says, serve to bring forth *infinite Goodness*? Was not the Redemption of Mankind *infinite Goodness*? Was not the Grace and Mercy shewn on Man (as Milton says afterwards) *infinite Goodness*? O! paw! paw! I fancy, Doctor, 'twill be the best way for us never to meddle with any thing which alludes to the Bible, for we are sure to make wretched Work of it whenever we do.

V. 221. *Leave i'th' midſt a horrid Vale.*] Why is this Hollow, you ask, which is made

by Satan's rising out of the burning Lake said to be horrid ? Troth, Doctor, I can't tell. Silly People indeed may think, that the Bed which the Devil was just got out of, might properly enough be call'd *horrid*; but to us who laugh at such things, and can talk so pleasantly of Hell, as we do in one of our following Notes, 'tis all a Joke : I am entirely therefore for altering it as you desire, to *gaping Vale*; which will make it another remarkable Example of the *Bathos* upon *Epithets*.

V. 259. *Tb' Almighty hath not built here for his Envy.] To raise Sense from mere Nonsense is much easier, you say, than to raise still better Sense from good.* This, my dear Doctor, is one of the most admirable and uncommon Observations that, I believe, ever was made; and I fear our Opponents, in Contradiction to it, will be apt to affirm, that 'tis *equally easy* to raise Sense from *Nonsense*, *better Sense* from *good Sense*, or *any Sense* at all from this Paragraph; forasmuch as all three are absolutely impossible. You then go on to raise *better Sense* from *Milton's good Sense*, by changing *God hath not built*, to *God hath no Butt*. Ha ! ha ! ha ! there you have demonstrated the Truth of your Proposition effectually, and at the same time convinc'd the gentle Reader, that as 'tis easy to raise *better Sense* from *good Sense*, so 'tis as easy

easy to depress good Sense into no Sense at all.

V. 605. *Signs of Remorse and Passion to behold.*] You are for substituting *Pity* in this Line instead of *Passion*, which has too wide a Signification, you say, as comprehending *Disdain*, *Rage*, &c. quite contrary to *Remorse*. Well, my Dear; and suppose it does? Is it out of Character, pray, for the Arch-Rebel to be represented as agitated by all these at once? Won't the Arch-Critick himself, think you, when thrown from his *Heaven of Vanity*, through his successless *Attempt* against the Prince of Poets, experience the same civil War within? Won't *dauntless Courage and considerate Pride* fit under his Brow likewise? Won't his Eye cast Signs of Remorse and Passion at the same time? Remorse for his own Folly, and Rage to find himself become the very Jest of School-boys, and a standing *Opprobrium Criticorum*?

V. 621. *Words interwove with Sighs.*] To interweave Words and Sighs together is peculiar to *Satan*, you say; for which Reason you are for changing *interwove* to *interrupt*. Had *Milton* said indeed *interwove together*, (as you say) I should have thought it *devilish bad English*, as well as you; but as it stands at present, I can't help looking on it as a very beautiful Metaphor. And, pray, is it not altogether as practicable

ble to interweave *Words with Sighs*, as to interlace *Complaints with Sighs*? And yet this is one of the Authorities you quote for your Alteration, from Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, which was much read, you say, by Milton. Was it so? Why then, 'tis very probable that Milton's interweave is an Imitation of Sir Philip's interlace, and altogether as close a one, I deem, as our *interrupt*. So that upon the whole, Doctor, I fear it will be alledged against us, that in this, as in many other of our Remarks, one half of the Note gives the Lye to the other, and, like weak Garrisons, we are destroy'd by the very Forces which we call'd in to our Assistance.

V. 636. *If Counsels different, or Danger shunn'd.]* Counsels different can't be right, you think; for there's no Hint in all the Poem that Satan differs from all the Council, or acted without their Consent, on which account you change it to *Counsels e're deferr'd*. My dear Dicke, what art thou talking of! Why, who says that he ever did differ from the Council? Does not he himself call all the Host of Heaven here to witness, that neither *different Counsels*, nor *Danger shunn'd by him, had lost their Hopes*? Is this saying that he ever did differ from them? Surely, surely 'tis quite impossible, that this Remark should be ever wrote by that solid Log-ician and sagacious Critick Ri-

*chardus Bentleius.* The Devil calls Witness to prove, that he never did differ from his Council; and the Doctor won't let him say so, because 'tis true. Very hard, that the Devil mayn't be allow'd to speak Truth for once. No, no, my Friend; this Note is none of ours, most assuredly: it has indisputably been foisted in by some Dunce of an Editor.

V. 642. *Which tempted our Attempt.] This Jingle, that seems studiously sought, has been censur'd, you say, deservedly; and therefore, according to Custom, you lay it at the Editor's door, and inform us that Milton gave Revolt, and not Attempt. 'Tis a frequent Practice, I find, with great Criticks, as well as Wits, to deny in one place, what they affirm in another; and to censure that one Hour, which they applaud the next: As an Instance of this, be pleas'd to turn to your Remark on V. 615.*

B. 6. where taking notice, *that those Passages of Satan and Belial's Festing had been censur'd by an ingenious Gentleman, (meaning Mr. Addison) who had a settl'd Aversion to all Puns, as they are call'd; you say, that if that Niceness be carry'd to Extremity, it will depretiate half the good Sayings of the old Greek and Latin Wits;* and you observe in Milton's Vindication, *that he copied those jocose Sayings from his great Predecessor Homer.* If this be true, why, say

say our Opposers, may not Satan be allow'd a Pun in this place, as well as the other? And why is it more culpable in the Author, or a less Imitation of the manner of the Antients in *Book I.* than in *Book VI.*? To which I reply, That the Spirit of Contradiction is the true Spirit of modern Criticism; and that we approv'd of those Passages in the 6th Book, for no other Reason, but because they were disapprov'd of by that *ingenious Gentleman*. However, Doctor, as *Milton* has practis'd this manner in several other places, I don't see why we should lay the blame on the Editor here, nor why *Attempt* should be changed to *Revolt*; *Attempt* being here, with Submission, the properest Word that could be us'd; so that if any Alteration be necessary, it must fall on the word *tempted*, and not on *Attempt*.

V. 664. *Millions of flaming Swords.*] In this place you change *Swords*, I find, to *Blades*; and that too without giving us any Reason for such Alteration, or making any Remark on the Passage. This, Sir, is a thing so unusual in you, who are always fond of making good the Saying of the Dunciad Hero,

' Still to explain a thing 'till all Men doubt it,  
 ' And write about it, Doctor, and about it;  
 that I am fully convinced this is an Omis-  
 sion

sion of some numpscull Editor, and shall therefore endeavour to restore the Note by Sagacity and happy Conjecture, and in such wise as shall not be deem'd disagreeing, I hope, from the Bentleian Character —

*Flaming Swords.* Stupid ! Could the *Blaze* of *Swords* (as 'tis afterwards said) *illumine Hell*? Absurd ! No, 'twas the *Sword-Blades* that did it. The Author gave the Passage thus :

— *And to confirm his Words, out flew Millions of flaming Blades, drawn from the Thighs*

*Of mighty Cherubims.* —

Now 'tis well known that the word *Swords* comprehends both *Hilt* and *Blade*; but surely the *Hilts* could not fly out ! Moreover, the *Hilts* could not be laid to be *drawn* from the *Thighs*, seeing it is well known that they hang farther above the *Hip*. But lastly, the least Objection which we have against *Swords* in this place is not yet to come ; you'll find that in the third Line subsequent to this, we had occasion for the Word to substitute in the room of *Arms*, which we dislik'd for manifold Reasons. *Vide our Note on V. 667.* so that if *Swords* was suffer'd to stand as it does here, we could not have made use of it so soon again ; on which account an Alteration became absolutely expedient. Let us return,

turn, then, to this ridiculous Editor, his *Swords*, with a *Wish*, in which I wot not but every Reader will join, That one of 'em had been in his Paunch, to have prevented him from thus wounding and scarifying our Author. And here astonishing has been the Stupidity of every former *Remarker* and *Commentator*, particularly of that *ingenious Gentleman*, who has quoted it at length as a beautiful Passage; without so much as taking notice of this egregious Blunder, or attempting any *Alteration*; an Inadvertency, which *I myself*, or any *true Critick*, would have been wholly incapable of.

Thus, my Friend, I have with incredible Labour and Guess-work, endeavour'd to restore to the Reader a *precious Remark*, which might otherwise have been totally lost; and which, I question not, but on the first Perusal he will own to be *genuine*.

Pass we on then to the second Book; and in *passing* thereunto, let me by the way crave Pardon for having *passed over* so many of your Observations and Alterations *unnoted*; in alleviation of which Neglect I have only this to say, That had I said *all* which might have been said upon *all*, my Epistle would have grown to such a stupendous Bulk, that of itself it would greatly overload the Mail.

Para-

*Paradise Lost, Book II.*

V. 3. Or where the gorgeous East with richest  
 [ Hand,  
 Showr's on her Kings Barbaric Pearl  
 [ and Gold.

These two Lines are the Occasion of much Mirth to you, as your Animadversion on them is the same, I wot, to every Reader. *Showr's Pearl and Gold, as if those dropt from the Clouds; when the one, you observe, is fetch'd from the Bottom of the Sea, the other from the Bafis of Mountains!* And what's that? You ask, *Show'r'd with Hand; as if Hand was the Instrument of show'ring.* *Show'r'd Gold on her Kings: Did no Subjects, you ask, get a few Drops?* But the Kings would have the worst of it to be stift'd and kill'd with such Showers. The Poet gave it thus, you say,

*Sow'd on her Clime Barbaric Pearl and Gem*

Sow'd well accords with Hand. Gems are peculiar to the East Indies: Gold as common in the West; and Clime was a Word our Author lov'd. Droll enough! and troth, in my Opinion unanswerable; unless our Gainsayers, merely for the sake of Contradiction, may say, that Milton (like all other Poets) was apt to make use of Metaphors, and other kind of figurative Ways of expressing himself; and that therefore,

if such Ways are allowable, or even beautiful, as some think, this Expression of the *East shov'ring with richest Hand Gold and Pearl*, is so far from being culpable, that 'tis extremely elegant: and then they may farther affirm, perhaps, that *Kings*, in this place, is the only Word that could with any Propriety be made use of; because the Poet was speaking of the Magnificence of Satan's *Throne*, as far outshining that of any earthly King whatever. Moreover, it may be ask'd, how the *East* could *Sow* on its own *Clime*, *Pearl* and *Gems*? The *East* might afford out of its *Clime*, *Gold* and *Pearl* for their *Kings*, (as *Milton* says;) but for the Eastern *Clime* to *Sow* on its own *Clime*, (as the Doctor says) is not a little marvellous.

V. 67. *Black Fire and Horror.*] *Fire* you change to *Glare*. *Black Glare* I must confess has the more *dismal* Sound of the two, and very much resembles, I believe, *Transpicuous Gloom*.

V. 136. *All Hell should rise with blackest Insurrection.*] *Blackest Insurrection* must be alter'd it seems to *blackest Infuscation*, as you'll vouch the Poet gave it. *Blackest Insurrection!* *Lofty Nonsense!* You say. *What's rise with Insurrection?* *What's black Insurrection?* *Are there Insurrections of several Colours?* To all which our Adversaries can in truth answer nothing, save that *blackest*

*blackest Insurrection* is intelligible, but *blackest Infuscation* is such a *cursed Expression*, that (as the Journalist says of the Laureat's Numbers) it would have been enough to have choak'd the Devil himself had he spoke it.

V. 232. *When everlasting Fate shall yield To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the Strife.*

The Poet you suspect gave it thus.  
*When Fate shall plead with fickle Chance.*

Because if *Fate yields*, you say it prevents a following *Strife*. This Alteration I insist on, my Friend, not to be yours, but an Insertion of some incorrigible Dunce of an Editor. This is plain, from considering the Context, which 'tis impossible the *Sagacious Bentley* could thus miserably mistake, and monstrously pervert. *Mammon* says, that they can never hope to *unthrone the King of Heaven*, till *everlasting Fate shall yield to fickle Chance*; and then goes on to say, that as the former is *Vain* to hope, so it argues the latter as *Vain*. Now was it possible that *Mammon* could say, that they might hope to *unthrone the King of Heaven*, if *Fate* was to plead with *Chance*? How plead with *Chance*? Absolute Nonsense! Or allowing that *Expression*, (which no body will allow tho') how could *Fate's pleading with Chance* give them any hope to *unthrone the King of Heaven*,

*Heaven*, which they could only receive from its *yielding*, and it might *plead*, you know, to *Eternity*, without ever *yielding*? And as to what is objected about *Chaos judging the Strife*, it may be reply'd, that *Chaos* was not meant to *judge the Strife* betwixt *Chance* and *Fate*, but betwixt *Satan* and *Heaven's King*.

V. 256. *Hard Liberty before the easy Yoke of servile Pomp.*] 'Tis likely the Author gave it *lazy Yoke*, you say; for if it was *easy*, why was it not preferable to *hard Liberty*? Why truly my Friend the Devil best knows, who said it; but you know better I dare be sworn; you would not leave (if you could help it) the *lazy Yoke of College Pomp*; the luxurious sleepy *Slavery of Sloth*, for all the Acquisitions of Industry and Toil. But if I may have leave to offer any thing, with regard to the Alteration, I fear that *lazy Yoke* (as you said of *secret Mountain*) was never met with but here. I can conceive how a *Yoke* may be *hard* or *easy*, but how it can be *active* or *lazy*, is I must confess beyond my Apprehension; if you was so fond therefore of *lazy*, as to resolve on having it here, you had better have alter'd the Passage thus,

*Before the servile Yoke of lazy Pomp.*

And this I desire you will remember to do in your next Edition. V. 274.

V. 274. Our Torments also may in length  
of Time become our Elements.] Here you  
substitute the following truly Heroic and  
Bentleian Line.

*Then, as was well observ'd, our Torments may.*

Ha, ha, ha! This diverting Alteration  
you made too, it seems, out of your great  
Zeal against any ones *making use* of what  
is not their *own*. Mammon, you say, steals  
*this from Belial, who pleaded on the same*  
*side of the Question, and ought therefore to*  
*make Restitution of it to its proper Owner.*  
This Remark, I must confess, is true Divi-  
nity; which the most *Malevolent*, I think,  
can say nothing against; but as to  
the poetical Justice of it, I fear they will  
dispute it. 'Tis true, they'll say, that  
*Mammon* is pleading on the same Side of  
the Question which *Belial* was before, and  
for that very reason it was allowable in him,  
nay truly *oratorial* to make use of, and  
enforce several of the Arguments which  
the other had started, and that too, with-  
out ascribing them to him who had already  
spoke; which would have much weakn'd  
their effect, those Arguments being  
always found the most successful, which  
appear to have the most Authors. To  
which

which you may Answer, that you was led into this Error, by your desire of having the Devil quote his *Authority* for what he said; you being so very fond of *Authorities* yourself, that you frequently make use of them to your own confusion and overthrow.

V. 304. *And princely Counsel in his face  
yet shone,  
Majestick tho' in Ruin.*

*Princely Counsel* you change I find to *Princely Feature*, as *Milton* gave it, you say; for how *Counsel* could *shine* or be *Majestick*, or be in *Ruin*, is *beyond your understanding* it seems. As to its being *Majestick* or in *Ruin*, 'tis I believe what no body could *write*, any more than *understand*; but I doubt it will be here affirm'd, that the Author of those Lines, whether *Milton* or the Editor, did not intend you should understand so; that 'tis *Belzebub's Face*, not *Counsel*, which is here said to be *Majestick tho' in Ruin*, which is evident to every School-Boy; and that as to *princely Counsel* shining in his *Face*, it's a very just and beautiful Metaphor, and altogether as intelligible, as what is said in the two preceeding Lines of *Deliberation and publick Care* being engraven on his Front.

To

To which I think we can only Answer, that we know nothing of Metaphors and such stuff, nor don't allow of them; that if an Author, under cover of poetical License, shall fly out of our Ken, with his Figures and *Subintelligitur's* at his Tale, and leave his *Accidence* behind him; we must clip his Wings, and clap a Lead on his Shoulders to keep him within the Sphere of our own Apprehensions.

V. 395. *Sage he stood.*] The Author must have given it, *Huge he sgt.*, because the grave *Aspect* was mention'd before you say. 'Tis very true, it was so, for four Lines above, he is said to rise with grave *Aspect*, and in his rising seem'd a Pillar of State. If he rose then, it may be ask'd, how he came to be sitting now? And as he's called a Pillar then, what need his *Hugeness* be again repeated? As to his *Sageneſs* being mention'd, it was very proper, they'll tell us, to give the Reader a stronger Idea of his Wisdom, who put an end to this long Debate and infernal Council, by a Speech which is the Cause of Satan's Enterprise to the new created World, and the Foundation of all our woe.

V. 441. *Plung'd in that abortive Gulp.*] You are for having it swallow'd in thy abortive Gulp, that being more formidable,

you say. There are none but must readily consent to this Change, as being conyinc'd that 'tis truly *frightful* and *dismal*.

V. 516. *Four speedy Cherubim.*] Milton, you suspect, gave it sturdy *Cherubim*; sturdy, stout, robust, able to blow a strong *Blast*. — Um — this is like stonied, stound-ed, stan'd, B. I. V. 52. But why not *speedy*? Why, there's not much need of *Swiftness* to be a good *Trumpeter*, you say: To which some may answer, nor of *Robust-ness* either, except in the *Buccinatorial Muscles*. I would therefore, in the next Edition, advise you to put it, *Four stout-cheek'd Cherubim*; which will give the Reader a lively Image of a *Trumpeter*, and at the same time improve the Allusion, which you evidently aim'd at in this Alteration, to the round, plump, *Cherubim Faces* we meet with in *Altar-Pieces*, and over the *Water-Spouts of Churches*.

V. 631. *Puts on swift Wings.*] This is a merry Blunder, you say, of the Printer or Editor; as if Satan had no natural *Wings* of his own, but was forc'd, like *Dædalus*, to put some on: You are therefore for reading it, *Put on swift-wing'd*. Here, I doubt, the Adversary will be apt to aver, that this is a merry Blunder of the sagacious Dr. Bentley, who could not plainly see that

that Milton's Expression was metaphorical, and meant nothing else than moving forward *Swiftly with his Wings*. To which we must answer, as we have done before, that we do by no means allow of the *metaphorical way of speaking.*

V. 654. *A Cry of Hell-Hounds.]* You may be ignorant, you say, of the Hunter's Language, but you should believe that Milton gave it Crew of Hell-Hounds. To which the Cavillers may reply; that a Cry of Hounds being truly the Hunter's Language, 'tis plain that Milton was not quite so ignorant as Dr. Bentley; and that 'twas something worse than Ignorance in the latter, to make an Alteration in a Passage before he knew whether it was right or wrong.

V. 900. *And to Battel bring their Embryon Atoms.]* This, you say, has been recommended as a fine Expression; however, you are generously resolved to give it the Editor. What a Gulp of Nonsense, you cry. Indivisible Points are all of 'em great with young; and these unborn young ones, without their Parent Atoms, are all brought to Battel; add to these, that *every* is the singular; so that 'tis a Violation of Grammar, besides a Breach of common Sense. My dear Doctor, I beseech thee for Criticism's

cism's fake not to talk so ridiculous. In  
the Name of common Sense, what's the  
Cause of all this Outcry? Is it not evi-  
dient that Milton, in this place, uses Em-  
brion as an Adjective Epithet; so that Em-  
brion Atoms is neither more or less than  
*unform'd Atoms?* An Expression that's both  
good Sense and good Grammar. Prithee  
now, Dicke, don't expose thyself in such  
a villainous manner; o'my life, if you do,  
you'll certainly get the Name of *Embrion*  
yourself, and be call'd the *unborn or unsba-  
pen Critick.*

V. 1019. Or when Ulysses on the Lar-  
board shun'd.] This Larboard in herock  
Style, you say, is abominable. Why traly,  
Doctor, you are right, I believe all must  
own, in that. Technical Words, or Terms  
of Art, are by no means proper in Poetry,  
where ev'ry thing that is said ought to  
be obvious and easyl. But pray, my  
Friend, what do you think then of *Ar-  
ctic*, *Antarctic*, *Rerc*, *Base*, *Cone*, *Oblique*,  
and several other Words of the like abo-  
minable Nature, which you have given us  
in the Lines you have been so obliging as  
to make for *Milton*? We have burnt our  
Fingers, I doubt indeed, Doctor, here;  
for want of dealing in our Bible a little  
more, which would have taught us to pluck  
*first the Beam out of our own Eye, before we  
pretend-*

*pretended to pluck the Mote out of our Brother's.*

*Paradise Lost, Book III.*

V. 35. *Blind Thamyris, and blind Mœonides,  
And Tiresias, and Phineus, Prophets*

[ old.]

In these two Lines you find the Editor's *Fist* again. Thamyris, a barbarous Thracian, you say, who out of Lust challeng'd the Muses to lie with them all Nine: A fine Person for Milton to desire to rival in Renown.

To this our Opposers may probably answer, That if we had not been more blind than either of the four mention'd in the Passage, we might have found out that this fabulous Story of his Lust for the Muses, meant nothing more than his extraordinary Love of Poetry; so that Milton need not be ashame of keeping him Company; and as to what we object against Tiresias and Phineus, as being old Prophets, and Prophecy being a thing which Milton never pretended to, they may say that your old Prophets were likewise old Poets, Prophecies being generally deliver'd in Verse; and that 'tis plain they were look'd on as the same sort of People, the same Name of Vates being given to both: and then upon the whole they may wickedly aver, that as Dr. Bentley by some of his former Remarks,

marks, has shewn himself to be an *Ieno-ramus* in *Divinity* and the *Clafficks*, so here he appears to be as much so in *History* and *Fable*.

V. 215. *And Just th' Unjust to serve.*] A shocking Expression, you say; as if all in Heaven were not then just. You desire therefore that we'll read it, *Die the Dead to save.* Indeed, indeed, Doctor, this will never do; our Alteration and Remark will assuredly be call'd *shocking* instead of the *Original*. The Sense of the Passage is not, which of you will be just to save the *Unjust*, but which of you *Just* will offer yourselves to save the *Unjust*: agreeable to the Apostle, who makes use of the very Expression, *the Just for the Unjust*. And now, Doctor, what have we to say for ourselves? We must plead Ignorance again with regard to that same Bible. I'm sorry to think what Advantage we give our Adversaries, by perpetually making a Blunder when any thing comes in our way that has any relation to *Scripture*. What a strange *Droll Mortal* is this, (they'll cry) to set up for an universal Critick in Arts and Sciences, when he's a mere *Novice* in his own *Employment*; nay, not so much as acquainted with *Chapter* and *Verse*; and a *Professour* of *Divinity* too: that's a Shame!

V. 359. Rolls o'er Elysian Flowers her  
*Amber Stream.*] 'Tis not well conceiv'd, you  
say, that Flowers grow at the Bottom of a  
River, on which account you are for reading  
reluctant. Gems. To which it may be  
answer'd, that Milton did not intend any  
such thing should be conceiv'd: That this  
Description of Heaven, is a beautiful Parody  
of several Descriptions in the Heathen  
Poets of their *Elysian Fields*; and *rolling*  
over *Elysian Flowers*, means nothing more  
in this Place, than *rolling amongst Elysian*  
*Flowers*, and by that means reflecting them  
in such a Manner, as to appear to be  
*rolling over them*: Agreeable to those  
Lines in Mr. Addison's *Cato*, where speak-  
ing of a *Limpid Stream*, he calls it a *Float-*  
*ing Mirror*, which

" Reflects each Flower, that on the Border  
grows,

" And a new Heaven in its fair Bosom  
shows.

But this, you'll say, is pleading for  
poetical Suppositions, Allusions, &c. all  
which License and airy kind of Trumpery,  
you have already, in more than one place,  
declar'd against.

V. 444. None yet, but Store hereafter.] Here Sir you modestly slice off 55 Lines at once from Milton, and bestow them on your Favourite *Phantom the Editor*. Now with regard to this, as likewise to the rest of your *Amputations*, it may be said in general, that though some of the Lines in those Places, may seem to want the usual *Spirit and Judgment* of the Author; yet this is no reason to suppose them Spurious, forasmuch as the most sprightly Genius, may sometimes *Flog*, and the most attentive Judgment, in a Work of such a Length, be now and then *caught Napping*.

Moreover, as to the present Passage, 'tis plain, they'll affirm, that 'tis Milton's own, from the Argument of the Book, where he mentions the Limbo of Vanity, and what Things and Persons fly up thither. And here the *Laughers* may very probably Sneer us, upon our knack of cutting, as almost coming up to the modest Laureat himself; on which account, as well as for our excellency in *Verfification*, they may propose us, as fit to succeed him in his double Capacity.

V. 497. *The Paradise of Fools*—now unpeopled and untrod.] No Fools in this Age? you ask. Yes, very great ones, the Adversary will answer, or else poor Milton could

could never have been so miserably misunderstood ; who is very far from meaning by now the Age in which he liv'd, but the Time which he was taking notice of ; the Time when Satan walk'd up and down in this Limbord A way of speaking which is common ; they'll say, to all Poets whatever it not common to abusen fids fiofni onw au to l ye and day altil n b ving and old.

V. 507. *With sparkling Orient Gems.]*  
You desire it may be chang'd to sparkling ardent Gems. With all my heart ; that is, sparkling sparkling Gems ; akin to transpicuous Transpicuity, skinny Rind, black Infuscation, &c. all which are warranted by a Rule in the Bathos upon Epithets mention'd before, to which therefore no Objection can possibly be made.

Paradise Lost, Book IV.

V. 171. *From Media post to Egypt, there  
faſt bound.*

Who will doubt, you say, but Milton gave it Ægypt's utmost Bound. To which it may be answer'd, that ev'ry one will doubt it. This Passage, you own, is taken out of Tobit, where 'tis said that Asmodæus fled to the utmost Parts of Egypt, and the Angel bound him. So that I think, Doctor, here's Foundation enough for a Query at least, since 'tis expressly said

said that he was *there fast bound*; and tho' it adds nothing to the Comparison, yet as 'tis well known that *Milton* is fond of alluding to Passages in Scripture, and transcribing Sentences of it whenever he finds Opportunity, every one will be convinc'd that the present Reading is genuine: And indeed this Fondness of *Milton* for his Bible has prov'd a little unhappy for us, who not being much read in such an old fashion'd Piece of Literature, have thereby been led into many scurvy Mistakes.

V. 263. *Her Crystal Mirror holds.*] Her, you desire, *may be alter'd* to its. *The Lake*, you say, *holds a Mirror to the Bank*: *Why must this Lake then be made a Person?* In good troth, Sir, I can't see why or wherefore, save that *Milton* had a mind to make a Person of her, as he does of a *River* in his third Book, and of *Thunder* in his first Book. In short, Doctor, these Poets take such illimitable Liberties, that they create and annihilate, *personify* and *transmogrify* just as they please; and as they make Persons of Rivers and Trees, so were they to speak of a certain celebrated and wonderful *Critick*, it might likely come into their Heads to *unbody* him at once, and call him a *flinking Ditch*, or a *rotten Stump*.

V. 325. Under a Tuft of Shade that on a Green,  
-wolls Stood whispering soft.—

On a Green is poor Stuff indeed, you say: Change it thus, To the Breeze. So the Tuft of Shade stood whispering to the Breeze, hey, Doctor. Ha ! ha ! ha ! admirable ! nay, and poetical too, I'gad, and new. We often read of Trees and Tufts whispering with a Breeze, or the Breeze whispering thro' them. But for them to whisper to the Breeze is quite out of the common Road.

V. 602. All but the watchful Nightingale.] You read not all, instead of all but; for the Owls, you say, did not strike off at the Approach of Darkness any more than the Nightingale. Why, truly, Doctor, it was a little careless of the Poet, not to take any notice at all of the poor Owl. But you see what the World was come to even in Milton's Time; every thing that was solemn and grave neglected. And though it may be said in Defence of our Author, that the Nightingale is the most poetical Bird of the two, the Owl is certainly the greater Critick, as 'tis plain by his being much employ'd in nocturnal Lucubrations. To make amends therefore for this Oversight in Milton, I would advise you to write some Animadversions on Mr. Ralph's

Poem, call'd *Night*, where you will have Opportunity to do Justice to our Fellow-Labourer *Bubo*.

V. 810. —Ithuriel with his Spear  
Touch'd lightly.

Here you ask, *Why you may not add one Verse to Milton, as well as his Editor add so many.* Ay, ay, undoubtedly: Come, let's hear it.

*Knowing no real Toad durst there intrude.*

Extremely good, indeed! and I defy the Editor to shew such a one amongst all that he has added. This is a manifest Imitation of Homer and Virgil, who were always fond of making the Sound an Echo to the Sense. Pray observe, Reader:

*Knowing no real Toad durst there intrude.*

Here, you see, the Versification and Sentiment are quite of a Piece: How naturally does the Movement of the Line imitate the croaking of a Toad! The Harmony of the one is the same as of the other. If any of our Gainsayers are rash enough to object against this Line, let 'em match it with another, and we'll freely forgive them.

V. 867, *But like a proud Steed rein'd, went*  
 [ *haughty on,*

You read,

*But haughtily stalk'd on, like a proud Steed.*

This every one must acknowledge to be truly an Emendation, seeing that the Comparison of a stalking-Horse gives the Reader a lively Idea of

— *A Devil*

*Overcome with Rage.*

*Paradise Lost, Book V.*

V. 5. — *Which th'only Sound  
Of Leaves and fuming Rills —*

What's that? (you cry) *the Sound of fuming Rills?* You never found that the Fumes or Steams of Rills or Rivers, which only appear in a Calm, made a Sound; you therefore desire it may be murmuring Rills. Pooh, pooh, Doctor; now here thou art growing childish again: Why, prithee, who ever said that they did make a Noise? 'Tis plain that Milton meant no such thing. What he says of the Rills fuming, is a beautiful Allusion to the Steams and Fumes which usually rise from Springs in the Morning; which particular Time of the Day he is describing. He does not say the Rills made a Sound, because they fum'd; but

but that the Rills which sum'd at this time, serv'd with their Sound or Murmuring to disperse Adam's Sleep. However, your Alteration has one Excellency, which you are wonderful fond of: *The Sound of murmuring Rills* is just the same as the *Sound of sounding Rills*.

V. 216. — *She spous'd about him, twines her marriageable Arms* —

*Why her Arms, you say, more marriageable than the rest of her Substance?* To which the Sneerers, I suspect, will answer, because Milton was too modest to mention any other Part; which had we been in his place, we should doubtless have done, from the Fondness we manifest of having a Finger in an amorous Case.

However this might have been, I'm sure there's no one can say, but that your Alteration of *marriageable* into *lascivious* adds a Strength to the Passage. Twining her *marriageable Arms about him* is faint and cold, and means no more than a modest *bridal Salute*; whereas *lascivious Arms* raises the Sense, warms the Imagination, and gives the Reader an Idea of something beyond Matrimony.

V. 414. *For know, whatever was created,*  
*To be sustain'd and fed* —

[needs  
This

This Doctrine, you say, (of Spirits requiring Food) may pass in Heaven, where Nectar and Ambrosia are always in plenty: but how will it do in Hell, where they have nothing to eat but Hell Fire? and no Danger of their Dinner's growing cold. S'life, Sir, are you mad? Did ever such a Piece of prophane Drollery come from a *Doctor of Divinity*? I remember but one Instance of any thing like it, which was this: A Gentleman of your Profession and Dignity being present at a *Legerdemain Show*, and observing one of the Tricksters devour a great Quantity of burning Flax, (cry'd out with an Interjection not fit to be mention'd) *What will the Devil do with this Fellow hereafter, when he can eat Fire already!* I must confess, my Friend, I don't know what I can say here in your behalf: It really grieves me to find you have laid yourself so open to the Censorious, who will unquestionably take occasion from these two last Passages to assert, that the Grave, the Learned, the Sagacious Richard Bentley, D. D. and Divinity Professor in the University of Cambridge, has, in his Remarks upon *Paradise Lost*, been notoriously guilty both of Immodesty and Prophaneness; and that at an Age too, when more than Threescore and ten had spoke loudly in his Ears. But hold! the last Part of this Aspersion may furnish us with an Answer to the whole:

for if the Doctor was upwards of Threescore and ten, why then he was past the Age of Man, and arriv'd at his second Childhood, and consequently tho' these Crimes must be laid to his Charge, yet he may fairly plead *Not guilty.*

V. 785. — If better Counsels might erect  
Our Minds, and teach us to cast off the Yoke.

The bad Measure in this Line, you say,  
may be assisted thus;

Our Minds to quit the Yoke, hard and unjust.

To assist bad Measure, I suppose, is to make it worse, or to help it to be more bad, as the word *assist* imports; in which Sense you have most certainly assisted it, seeing (as the most obstinate of our Opponents must allow) the Measure of your Line is by many degrees worse than that of the Author's.

### *Paradise Lost, Book VI.*

V. 55. — Opens wide  
His fiery Chaos to receive their fall.

Here, I perceive, comes another of your admirable new Lines, which you hope (we are told in the Preface) will not be found disagree-

*disagreeing from the Miltonian Character;*  
You read the Passage thus, then

— *Opens wide*  
*Its fiery Jaws, wide to receive them all.*

Thus it must come from the Poet, you say, for as he always represents Chaos, as an unbounded Space on the outside of Hell, he could not with any propriety speak of it here, and Chaos could not be call'd fiery, where Hot and Cold were every moment fighting for the Mastery. To which excellent Remark, the Adversary can, in good troth, only Object, that Milton in this Place, was neither calling Chaos fiery, nor so much as speaking of it at all. That 'twas Tartarus or Hell, which he was here mentioning, and that its being said to open its fiery Chaos, was merely metaphorical, and only design'd to convey an Image of the horrible Confusion of the Place. But supposing there may be something of Truth in this Objection, I shall be still for the Alteration. Fiery Jaws is a much more tremendous Expression, and gives one a more dreadful and shocking Idea of Hell, than Chaos can possibly do; and then wide to receive them all, (wide being twice repeated, and all expressly mention'd) secures the pious Reader from the Danger of being led into a pernicious Heresy, by imagining

that some of the Devils might have fall'n  
on one side.

V. 93. *And in fierce Hosting meet.]* You don't remember it seems, ever to have met with the Word Hosting, for which reason, you desire it may be chang'd to Jousting, a Word which I doubt our Adversaries will be apt to swear, was never met with by any body at all: and the malicious may furthermore be ready to affirm, that if every Word of Milton was to be cut out, which you did not understand, the Paem would soon be reduc'd to the Size of a Primmer. Could any one, they'll say, but a Child who had not thrown away its Fescue, make so ridiculous a Blunder in so plain a Passage? Milton says, that it seem'd strange that Angels who were wont to meet unanimous in Festivals of Joy and Love, should now meet in fierce Hosting, that's to say, in fierce Contention. Very well: but now here comes the Sagacious and Conjecturing Doctor, (they'll cry) and talks of Knights at Tilt and Tournament, and then changes the Word Hosting, by which is understood the most dreadful Strife and Contention, to Jousting, which means at most (if any meaning it has) a Bout at Cuffs, or a Wrestling Match. But let them snarl Sir, and shew their Teeth if they please, it will not be adviseable in us to make them any

any answer, but let us rather involve ourselves secure and pleased in our own Sagacity and Entertainment.

However, though I must allow the Alteration to be good, yet as you have observ'd, that there is something better in Poetry than Good, I am formaking it still better in the next Edition, by Reading *fierce Jostling*, instead of *fierce Jousting*, which will convey a yet more profound Image of the Contention in Heaven, and at the same time bring down the Sense to the meanest Capicity.

V. 217. — *All Heaven Resounded, and had Earth been then, all Earth Had to her Center shook.*

Now our Author, you say, is come to that part of his Poem, where he is most to exert what faculty he has of *Exordios*, *Magniloquence of Stile*, and *Sublimity of Thought*. Very true Doctor, and consequently 'tis your Busines now to exert what Faculty you have of *Exordios*, *Pusilloquence of Stile*, and *Profundity of Thought*; and that you have a very astonishing Faculty that way, I'm sure every one must acknowledge, upon the first perusal of your Alteration of this Passage.—*En & Ecce!*

Heaven's Base

Stood trembling; but had Earth been there,  
[ all Earth  
 Had from her Center fled.

Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Admirable! Wonderful! Amazing! Surprising!

*This Alteration is requisite, you say, to reconcile high Language with Philosophy and true Sense, for as any external Impression that can shake all Earth, must needs shake the Center too; mentioning the Center afterwards, adds nothing to the Thought, but provokes Derision. The Base of Heaven stood trembling, but the Earth would have fled, is continuing the same Thread, you say, which is much better than to pass from resounded to shook.*

Nay, Nay, Doctor, you need not have taken so much Pains to perswade us into the Alteration, for I'm convinc'd it must give your very Enemies a world of Pleasure and Satisfaction upon barely reading it. What a diverting Image is that of Heaven's Base being seiz'd with a shaking Fit, at sight of the Angels rushing to Battel; and then Earth taking to her Heels and running away from her Center, is inimitably picturesque; not to mention the beautiful Contrast, or Opposition in the two Characters, one scouring off, because

cause in a *Fright*, and the other *standing still* for the very same reason. But I doubt it will be ask'd, how the *Earth* would have been able to leave her *Center* behind her, for as the *Center* is much the smallest, and consequently the nimblest of the two, one would have thought it should rather have got the Start of the other. To this you may answer, that you imagine it would have been in the Condition of *Heaven's Base*, and stood *shivering*, without being able to gather up its *Legs*, and convey its *Body* out of harm's way.

V. 237. *No unbecoming Deed, that argu'd fear.] Deed, you here defin'd may be chang'd into Flinch, for 'tis want of Deeds,* you say, that argues *Fear*. Here Doctor, I think you ought at least to have given us a *Dissertation upon a Flinch*, and inform'd us what kind of *Flinches* were *becoming*, and *argu'd Courage*, and what were *unbecoming* and *argu'd Fear*, for now I doubt we shall not be able to know an *unbecoming Flinch* from *any other*, because all *Flinches* have hitherto been deem'd *unbecoming alike*.

V. 867. *Hell heard th' unsufferable Noise;*  
[Hell saw  
Heav'n ruining from Heav'n.]

This

This Passage you desire may be read as follows:

*Hell heard the hideous Cries and Yells, Hell*

[ said]

*Heav'n tumbling down from Heav'n.*

Admirable indeed! ha! ha! ha! nay, and the Reasons you give for this Alteration are altogether as good too as the Alteration itself. *Why Noise*, you ask? there could be no great Noise caus'd by Spirits falling thro' next to a Vacuum: It must be therefore the Glamour of those that were falling, and not the Noise of the Fall. But here, Doctor, I doubt the Cavillers will ask, how hideous Cries and Yells could be heard in a Vacuum? or what other Noise? O my Esteem'd Friend, this will prove a kind of a crooked grain'd Question; however, we have no Busines to make any Answer, you know, save by Silence alone. As for unsufferable, it fills the Verse, you say, more than it does the Sense; to which it will be answer'd in Milton's Defence, that the word unsufferable alludes to what is said of Hell's attempting to fly from the Noise, by which it must be conceiv'd to be truly unsufferable. Lastly, you observe in behalf of your Alteration, that Heav'n running from Heav'n is not so well, because running is here a Deponent, but in some places an Active: better therefore, Heav'n tumbling down